

Diversity Council Special Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 8, 2025 at 6:30pm

Hybrid Meeting: In-Person and on Zoom

Meeting Room 1-2, City Hall, 111 N. Main St., Bristol, CT

Attendees: Marcus Patton – Interim Chair, and City Council Member, Mark Dickau with Council Members Sandra Kamens, Tony Lopes, and David Rackliffe on Zoom

Absent: Council Member Jeff Israel
Note: Council Member Jeff Israel later confirmed he was unable to join the meeting due to technical limitations in his location.

Guests: None

I. Call to Order

Interim Chair Patton called the meeting to order at 6:32pm. There was a quorum.

II. Public Participation

There was no Public Participation.

III. Council Attendance

Council attendance was taken.

IV. Current Business (Special Meeting)

- a. Operating under City of Bristol umbrella vs. Task Force or similar
 - Introduce topic of discussion
 - Each council member presents their position
 - Call to vote
 - Layout action plan post vote (if applicable)

The Interim Chair reviewed the options and what they looked like for the Council moving forward as previously discussed. He then called for Council Member input before putting it to a vote.

Council Member Kamens expressed her support of becoming a Task Force.

Council Member Rackliffe clarified that becoming a Task Force now meant that they could still move to a different operating level at a later date. Typically, a Task Force is to address a specific issue or goal and then disband. If the flexibility is there to be a Task Force now with eyes on the long term, he expressed his support of moving to a Task Force.

Council Member Lopes was also in favor of moving to a Task Force with the understanding that there is no end date. This move would future proof them from constraints they're currently under, and set them up to serve the city in the best way they can long-term.

Interim Chair Patton echoed the above sentiments, and spoke in favor of becoming a Task Force for a time, and to then transition into an independent entity. This would include becoming a 501(c)3, and growing membership with people who are passionate about serving the city regardless of political affiliation.

The Interim Chair spoke with the mayor that day with regard to the options and resources that the Council had discussed. He confirmed that as a Task Force they would still have use of City Hall, access to a Recording Secretary, and the ability to fundraise with Board of Finance approval. With this in mind, it was the Interim Chair's recommendations to move forward as a Task Force with a goal of separating completely in the near future.

The Interim Chair called for a vote for the Diversity Council to become a Task Force under the mayor, for a limited time, to then move into an independent body as discussed. The motion was put forward by Council Member Lopes and seconded by Council Member Rackliffe. All were in favor, and the Motion passed into the record.

Interim Chair Patton will now draft a letter to the Mayor's Office to accept their plan. It will then go to City Council and then he should hear back from them shortly after.

V. Adjournment

The Interim Chair called for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Council Member Kamens and was seconded by Council Member Rackliffe. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:44pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Arsego
Recording Secretary